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17 July 1969

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MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]

DDI Planning Staff

SUBJECT : Comments on Staff Study of  
Electronics and Communications  
Research in the DDI

1. A few weeks ago, Mr. Gordon Gray requested a CIA briefing on Soviet military communications and command and control as they relate to Soviet strategic offensive and defensive forces. He had been asked to look into this matter by the Chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, General Maxwell D. Taylor. Drawing upon the resources of OER and OSR, we presented an informal but comprehensive review of the state of our knowledge of the subject. The individual briefers did an excellent job. But the poverty of our knowledge and understanding was evident to Mr. Gray--as it has been to us in OSR for a long time. It was later reported to me that Mr. Gray told Gen. Taylor the intelligence community doesn't appear to know very much about Soviet strategic communications, command, and control.

2. With that kind of report, it would not surprise me if at some point Gen. Taylor says (or writes) to the Director, "what are you doing about improving your analysis on command and control aspects of Soviet strategic forces?" If the Director then turns to the DDI and all he can come up with is the staff study as now drafted, the DDI will look pretty silly. Faced with a major substantive deficiency in the Intelligence Directorate that has now persisted some two years, all the staff study can find to recommend is that OSR step up the level of its requirements on OER, and that no positions be moved or added. This would hardly be a satisfactory response for the DDI to make to the Director or for the Director to make to General Taylor.

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3. In short, the draft study dated 27 June 1969 does not come to grips with the issues I attempted to identify in my memorandum to the DDI of 6 December 1968. Moreover, it is at odds with my understanding of the record on some points. It makes much of the research viability (sic) and flexibility of present arrangements but nowhere does it address the importance to the US Government of a better understanding of Soviet and Chinese military communications and electronics. As drafted, the study will only perpetuate the current unsatisfactory situation. It offers no prospects for effectively improving the management of resources of the DDI as they relate to a vital subject area.

4. First, some important points of fact which I understand differently from that stated in the study:

a. You identify in your first section that in addition to the question of the level of effort, the other problem at issue is:

--To determine if the responsibility for the analysis of communist military electronics and telecommunications activities, now split between OER and OSR, is the most effective method of satisfying priority intelligence requirements.

The underlined portion of this statement is not correct. When OSR was formed, it was left that the electronics and telecommunications research effort of the DDI--and the analytical resources to carry out the task--would, pending review, remain in OER and that OER would continue to support OSR in the relationship which had existed between the Economic and Military Research Areas of ORR. The MRA had no resources to accomplish these tasks and neither the tasks nor the resources to accomplish them were assigned to OSR in the reorganization.

b. On page two, you state that the Director of Strategic Research "requested a resolution of the problem in light of what he considered generally inadequate responses to OSR requests

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for research by OER in the military communications and electronics fields." Nowhere in my memorandum of 6 December 1968 do I take that approach. Rather, I emphasized that our experience in running OSR for 18 months affirmed the need for an integral OSR capability in military electronics and communications if the Office is to be able to function effectively in an important area of its responsibility.

c. You state on page 6: "There is no hard evidence that OER has not been responsive to OSR requirements where such requirements have been made known to them." In most respects, OER has been as responsive as it can be given its commitments to its problems. But its priorities are not necessarily OSR's priorities. Let me give you one example. With the disestablishment of the Electronics Branch in OER, OSR formally advised OER of our continuing need for estimates of radar production. The OER response from the Chief, Industries Branch, on 13 February 1968 said:

"In former years the Electronic Equipment Branch of ORR...prepared ROB's for the purpose of estimating inventories of Radar's. Annual production data were then generated...At this time, analyst strength in U/I is too low to permit it to undertake a careful appraisal of ROB's that are available..."

5. I don't want to place exclusive emphasis on these misunderstandings, which in any event can be set straight rather easily before your report is forwarded to the DDI. More importantly, I think you should take another look at the broader aspects of the DDI's responsibility for intelligence analysis on Soviet and Chinese military electronics and communications.

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6. It is true that OSR and OER could reestablish in some degree the informal working relationship that existed between ERA and MRA. This would bring us back to the levels of support that had existed up to the time of the formation of OSR. Such a solution, however, does not seem to me to promise any overall improvement in the Intelligence Directorate's production of military intelligence--a basic reason for the creation of OSR--or in the efficiency of use of the resources available to the DDI.

7. There are several reasons why this is true:

a. The analysts and supervisors in OER are not, in their regular exposure to intelligence developments, as closely attuned to important military intelligence developments and source materials, and to the needs of policy makers in military matters as those in OSR.

b. Much closer working relationships would need to be established at the analyst level between those in OER working on the electronics and communications aspects of a military topic--such as the total air defense environment--and those in OSR working on the forces than can be efficiently conducted across Office lines.

8. As I see it, the Intelligence Directorate must do better than that if the DDI is to meet his responsibilities fully. In addition to the military economic tasks you cite in your study, there are other important considerations:

a. Recent OSR experiences with NSSM's indicates that the new Administration--particularly the NSC Staff--intends to study more closely problems of command and control, crisis management, warning times, and various other topics closely related to electronics and communication capabilities. We must anticipate more requirements for work on this in the years ahead.

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b. OSR studies of relative force capabilities of NATO and Warsaw Pact nations need to take into consideration the electronics and communications environment to a greater extent than has been possible heretofore. We think the possibility of fusion of ELINT, COMINT, and photography offers potential advantages.

c. The increasing quality of T-KH materials, coupled with the favorable outlook for ELINT and COMINT from satellites, may be viewed as improving source capabilities to offset the decline you state has occurred in the source materials OER has used in studying Soviet electronics and communications. Analytical resources should, I would argue, be applied to the best intelligence data base. New approaches to analysis along these lines would be difficult to conduct in OER, in isolation from studies of the military forces involved.

9. A more efficient way to meet the needs of both OER and OSR would be proportionately to divide the resources now assigned to OER based on the intelligence significance of the electronics and communications problems. In this case, the intelligence problems, as I see them, lie so predominantly in the area of military analysis on the Soviet Union and China that I would suggest about 80 percent of the analytical resources should be lodged in OSR.

10. If assigned to OSR, we would combine these resources into a single Electronics and Communications Branch, responsible for research and analysis on both Soviet Bloc and Communist China. Its studies would include such topics as:

a. National and individual military service command and control--from the point of view of facilities and operational relationships.

b. Equipment holdings of the forces--and the capabilities implications of these holdings in support of other OSR components.

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c. The military-economic implications of the production and deployment of electronic and communications equipment in the air, naval, ground, and missile forces.

d. Special studies on how to improve the utilization of ELINT, COMINT, PHOTINT, and other sources in this substantive area in combination to improve our understanding of the effectiveness of present and future weapons systems as systems and as force components.

11. In short, I urge you to reconsider your study as it now stands. The problem of an effective DDI attack on Soviet and Chinese military electronics and communications is growing more pressing. Status-quo recommendations won't solve the problem. It is a problem that can be vigorously addressed with reasonable prospect for results, but it will take organization and direction. For this problem in this Directorate at this time, that organization and direction should be part of the Office of Strategic Research.

BRUCE C. CLARKE, Jr.  
Director  
Strategic Research

Copies furnished:

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